Wilder Schools Toolkit

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

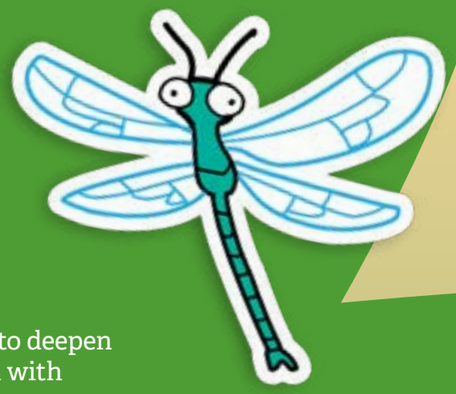
A handy guide to support your school in taking action for wildlife in your school grounds, whilst also supporting children's wellbeing and development.

The Wilder Schools project has been generously funded with support from the Friends of Holt Hall, Stuart Heath Charitable Settlement, John Jarrold Trust, The Hornsea 3 Community Fund, and NWT Children and Nature fund.

The Wildlife Trusts

norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

How to use this toolkit



This toolkit is for anyone who wants to deepen their school community's connection with their school grounds.

Section 1 is all about improving school grounds for wildlife; it gives practical advice and ideas for creating and maintaining spaces for nature.

Section 2 highlights the value of nature for wellbeing, and suggests some engaging, nature-based activities that focus on increasing children's wellbeing.

Finally, **section 3** provides ideas on how to take learning outdoors, and support children's development through connecting with nature.

Useful Links
There is a 'Useful Links' page at the end of each section, with relevant resources and information.

* in this document highlights hyperlinks to online resources. Full web-links to these resources are listed in the useful links page at the end of each section.

In taking part in the Wilder Schools programme and making positive changes for wildlife in your school grounds, your school is supporting the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.

Written by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust Wilder Learning team

Wilder Schools Toolkit

Orange tip butterfly

Wilder Schools Toolkit

Section 1

Actions for wildlife

School grounds improvements for wildlife

Small changes can go a long way to making any space better for wildlife! From putting up nest boxes to creating a meadow, there are so many ways to make any space a haven for wildlife, whatever area is available! These activities could also be a great focus for a fundraising event within the local community!

Use this section to help you and your pupils decide what improvements to make, and how to maintain them over time.

The last part of this section includes a list of useful links and some example spotter sheets.

Your school grounds

Use this space below to draw a map of your school grounds, including any existing habitats you have and any habitats/interventions you would like to add. This will help you to plan your future wildlife interventions. If it is easier, download a Google satellite view of your school grounds and annotate this instead. You may also find it useful to make a bigger version of this plan to add to your classroom noticeboard!

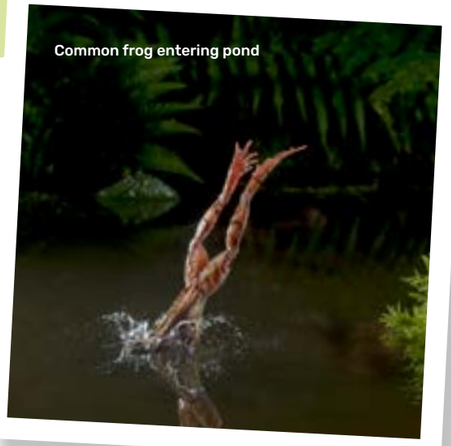
Wildlife interventions

Use this page to see what wildlife interventions you could action in your school grounds. To get the children involved, you could have a class/school vote on which habitats they would like to create or which animals they would like to support.

✓	Completed (what we already have)
★	Favourite (what we want to do)

		Intervention type	Species supported
		Pond	Frogs, toads, newts, dragonflies, freshwater invertebrates
		Meadow	Bats, birds, butterflies, bees, hoverflies, beetles, spiders, small mammals and other invertebrates and pollinators
		Native hedgerow	Small mammals, bats, birds, butterflies, beetles, bees and other invertebrates
		Native woodland	Large and small mammals, birds, bats, butterflies, beetles, woodlice, slugs, snails, worms and other invertebrates
		Long grass	Birds, butterflies, bats, moths, beetles, spiders, snails, crickets, grasshoppers and other invertebrates
		Bird box	Birds
		Bat box	Bats
		Log piles	Reptiles, amphibians, woodlice, worms, slugs, snails, millipedes, centipedes, solitary bees and other invertebrates
		Bug hotel	Woodlice, slugs, snails, beetles, centipedes, millipedes and other invertebrates
		Solitary bee home	Various solitary bees and other pollinators
		Native flower pots/beds	Bees, butterflies, hoverflies, beetles and other invertebrates and pollinators

Pond



Creating a pond in your school grounds is a fantastic way to support biodiversity. Ponds are home to two-thirds of freshwater species, including amphibians like frogs, newts and toads, as well as invertebrates like dragonflies and damselflies. Your pond will also attract other wildlife, such as mammals and birds, who will come for a drink or to splash around in the shallows. We have lost about 50% of our ponds in the last 50 years, so whatever size pond you install will make a huge difference and could be a useful learning resource.

When to create

Anytime

Where to place

Ponds work best when placed close to existing habitats, such as other ponds, log piles or hedgerows. It is important that the pond is placed in a sunny spot, making sure that it has sun on it's south and east side and vegetation on the north side. Vegetation can include long grass, log piles, trees or hedgerows.

Important bits!

- Use an online calculator to determine how much pond liner you will need. See the useful links page for more information.
- You do not necessarily need to add any aquatic plants to your pond, as these will colonise the pond naturally over time. However, if you did want to add some pond plants, Pond Folk* have some good options and can give you some ideas for the best native pond plants to include.

Maintenance

The pond will not need much maintenance for the first couple of years. Your main job will be to make sure that the pond doesn't become too overgrown or shaded, so keeping on top of the surrounding vegetation will be key. If any algae or vegetation is taken out of the water, make sure to leave it next to the pond for a couple of days so animals can make it back to the water. Any work to remove vegetation in or around the pond will need to be done in autumn and winter to ensure you don't disturb any newt or bird populations. In summer you will want to keep disturbance to a minimum due to breeding species, but do keep the water levels topped up as needed. If the pond freezes over in the winter, be sure to create a hole in the ice to allow oxygen to reach the water below.

Native aquatic plants
Water violet, frogbit, water starwort, hornwort, water mint, yellow flag iris, marsh marigold

Additional information
Installing a water butt a few months before your pond is created is a great way to collect rain water!

Alternative: if you don't have space for a big pond, why not create a mini wildlife pond instead?

Meadow

Wildflower meadows are an incredibly valuable habitat, supporting a variety of species as well as looking lovely! A meadow of any size provides amazing benefits for wildlife, even a small strip along the edge of your school field or near the entrance to your school will provide food and shelter for all sorts of invertebrates. Wildflower meadows are also an amazing learning resource, providing an opportunity to identify wildflowers and go hunting for minibeasts, which is always a hit! Take a look at the minibeast and butterfly spotter sheets at the end of this section which are a fantastic addition to any outdoor learning you may do!

When to create

August–October

Where to place

A sunny spot is best for a meadow, however you will have species that will do well in slightly shaded areas. Try linking up your meadow with other habitats, such as hedgerows, trees and long grass.

Important bits!

- You don't have to completely strip the area of grass for your meadow; raking the area to expose some bare ground is enough.
- Emorsgate Seeds* have some great native wildflower seeds — see the useful links page for more information.

Maintenance

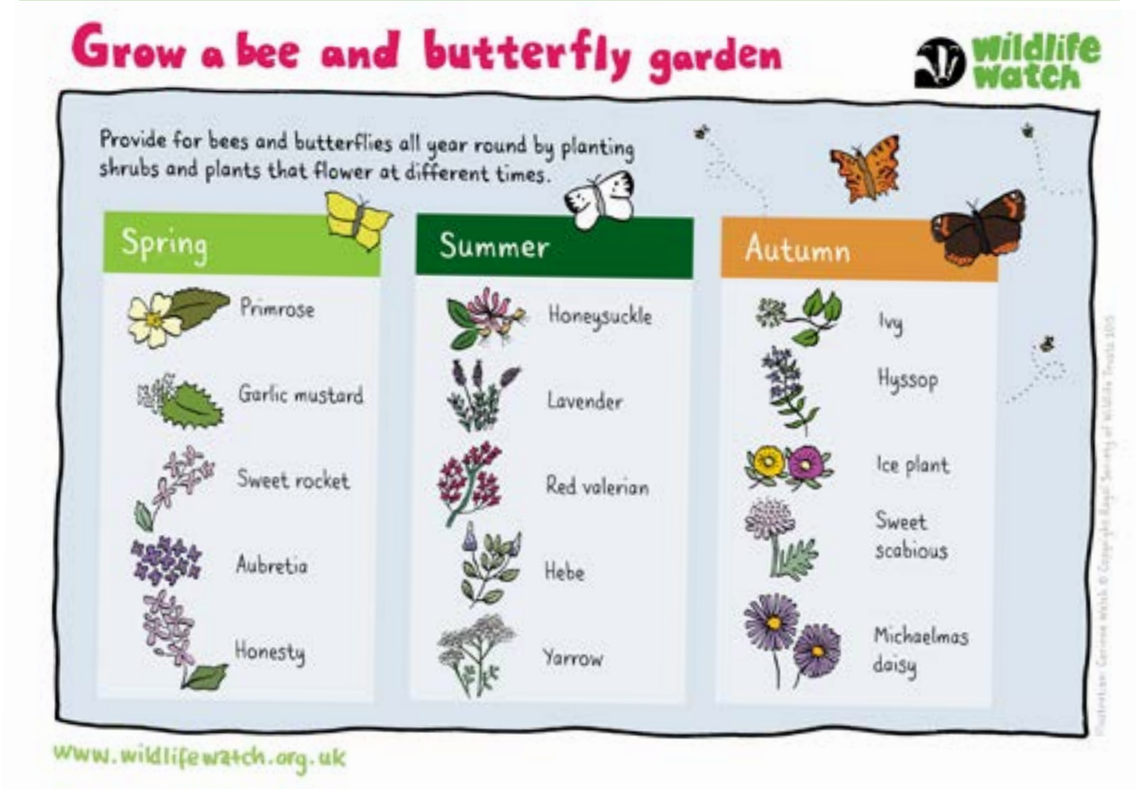
Your meadow will need to be cut at least once a year once it is established. The best time to do this is late-July or August, or leave until September, once all the seeds have set. Following this cut, the area can be mown in line with the rest of the school grounds until March, when you can then begin growing the meadow again. It is important that any cuttings are removed from your meadow, if they are left they will create nutrient build-up in the soil, which is not ideal for wildflowers, as they prefer nutrient-poor soil. Any cuttings you have can either be composted or left in another area of your school grounds to provide a habitat for hedgehogs, frogs and newts.

Native wildflower species
Oxeye daisy, yarrow, wild carrot, field scabious, meadow buttercup, common knapweed, yellow rattle

Additional information
You can cut your meadow with a strimmer, scythe or even shears if the meadow is small!

Alternative
Just let your grass grow long in some areas if you're not able to create a meadow! Taking part in No Mow May is a great place to start!

Alternative: use pots or planters for your pollinator-friendly plants instead of a meadow!



Hedgerows

Hedgerows are incredibly important as they help to create corridors to connect habitats, which would otherwise be small and isolated. This allows species to move safely between habitats. Hedgerows are also excellent sites for nesting birds and provide a rich source of berries and nuts for insects, birds and mammals.

When to create
November–March

Where to place
Hedgerows can be placed anywhere, but work best if they are connected to other habitats, such as meadows, long grass or woodland.

Important bits!
- It is best to plant in a double, staggered row to create thickness in the hedge when it matures. Each sapling, or whip, will want to be planted roughly 40cm apart.
- Make sure to leave a strip of uncut grass at the base of the hedge to provide nesting and feeding habitats for birds, insects and small mammals.

Materials needed
Whips (or saplings), tree guards, canes, spades

Maintenance
For the first few years, there will be very little maintenance to action. In 2–3 years, you will want to remove the tree guards. In 3–4 years, it is good practice to give the hedge a cut on top, which will encourage sideways growth which will result in a thicker, wider hedgerow. This should be done in January or February. Make sure to not do any maintenance on the hedgerow between March and July due to nesting birds. You will inevitably lose some of your plants for one reason or another — this doesn't mean you did anything wrong in the planting stage! If this happens, just fill in any gaps with some additional plants.

Native species
Hazel, hawthorn, crab apple, dogwood, field maple

Additional info
The Woodland Trust's Free Trees for Schools* initiative is a great way to source your native hedgerow plants.

Trees

Trees are amazing habitats for insects, mammals and birds and provide some brilliant learning opportunities as well. Get your class to identify tree species, look for nests or do some bark rubbings!

When to plant
October–March

Where to place
Anywhere

Important bits!
- Before planting, carefully consider the final size of your tree to ensure it has enough space to grow to its full potential without obstructing anything.
- Buy a seedling, or whip, that is between 60–90cm tall for the quickest growth rates.
- See the Woodland Trust's How to Plant Trees* guide for more information.

Materials needed
Whips (or saplings), tree guards, canes, spades

Maintenance
There is not much maintenance to be done when planting trees. In the early stages, make sure to remove any excess vegetation, such as grass, from around the sapling. You can water the saplings if there has been a particularly dry spell. Remove tree guards after 2–3 years.

Native species
Crab apple, rowan, hazel, oak, birch, hawthorn, goat willow

Additional info
The Woodland Trust's Free Trees for Schools* initiative is a great way to source your native hedgerow plants.

Bird boxes


Nest box

Bird boxes are a fantastic way to attract birds to your school grounds, especially if you lack the space for native trees for nesting. Habitat loss means there are fewer natural nesting spots these days, so the more we can do to help our feathered friends, the better!

When to create

Anytime, but for ease of maintenance install between September–February.

Where to place

Bird boxes should be installed facing between north-east and south-east so that it does not get too hot or too cold, as birds will abandon the nest if temperatures inside are too extreme. To increase the chances of your bird box being used, make sure there is a clear flight path out of the nest; don't put multiple bird boxes too close together and make sure they're located away from bird feeders.

Maintenance

At the end of each breeding season, when they are not being used, nest boxes should be removed and cleaned. This should be done before the new breeding season in the spring, so it is best to do between October and February.

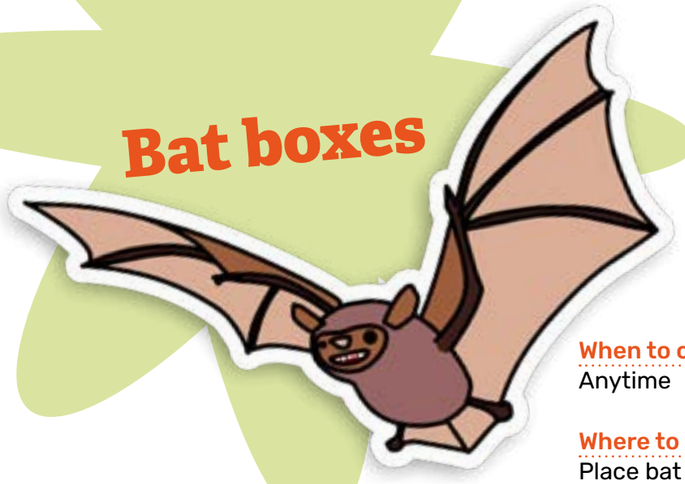
Additional info

Not all birds like the same nest boxes, so be sure to check what type of box you need for your chosen species! See National Nest Box Week* for more information.

Additional info
Why not take part in the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch*?

Alternative
If you have nowhere to put a bird box, why not leave some water or food out for them instead?

Bat boxes



Bat populations have declined significantly over the last century and they are threatened by habitat loss and the destruction of wildlife corridors. By installing a bat box, you are providing a safe place for bats to live.
Bats can eat up to 70% of their bodyweight in insects each night, meaning you get free pest control when you invite them into your school grounds!

When to create

Anytime

Where to place

Place bat boxes where bats are known to feed, ideally above 10ft, in a sheltered position, exposed to sun for part of the day and away from artificial light.

Maintenance

No maintenance should be done to the bat box once it has been installed.

Did you know?:
None of the bats in the UK drink blood!
They all like to feast on insects instead!

Barbastelle bat

Hedgehog homes

Hedgehog homes provide a safe, warm place for hedgehogs to sleep. Hedgehogs should be seen as welcome visitors to your school grounds as they are useful pest controllers, eating slugs and snails amongst other things! By providing a safe habitat with a plentiful food source, you are helping to protect this vulnerable species.

When to create

Anytime

Where to place

Place your hedgehog home in a quiet, shady area, making sure that the entrance doesn't face north or north-east to avoid the cold winter wind. Remember, if a hedgehog can't access your garden it can't make use of your hedgehog home!

Maintenance

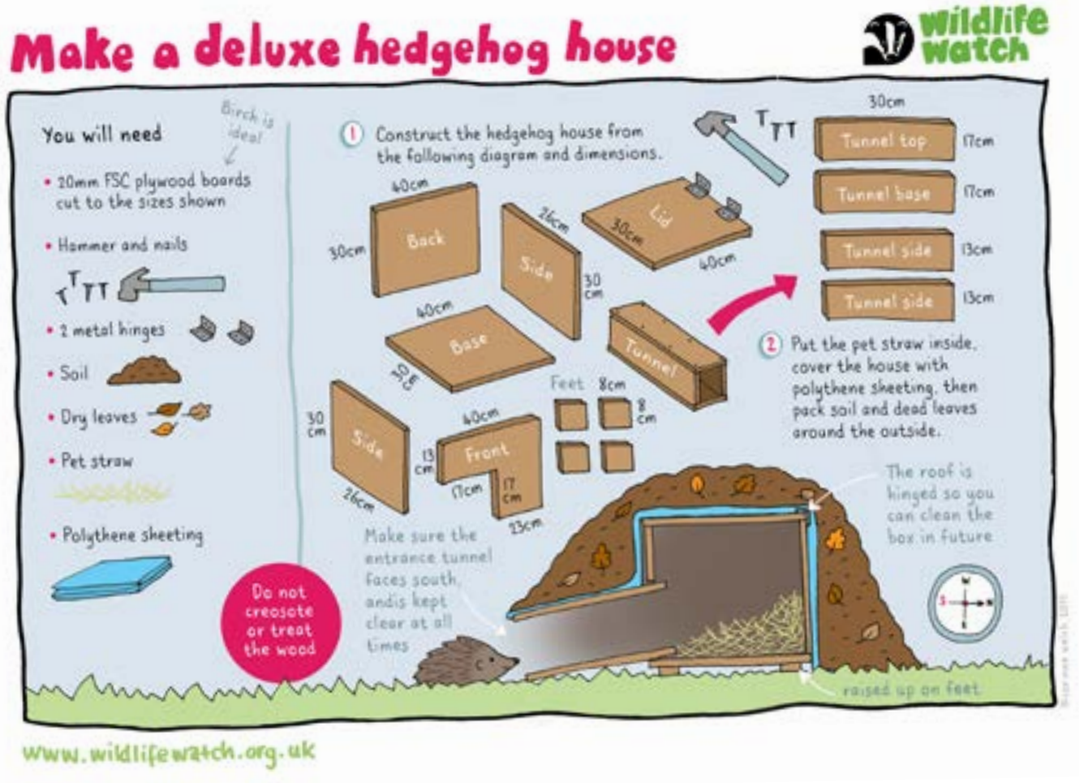
Some people like to clean the houses out in late March–early April. But make sure no one is living there before you do this!

Hedgehog in a hedgehog house

Additional information
Hedgehogs will travel up to 2km each night to feed, so leaving gaps in fences will help them move about and find food. See the hedgehog highway guide to get started.

Additional information
Become a Hedgehog Champion with Hedgehog Street*!

Alternative
Hedgehogs also love to make their homes in log or leaf piles, which is an easy alternative to making a hedgehog home!



Bee homes

With nearly 250 species, solitary bees in the UK are incredibly diverse, both in appearance and nesting habits. While many prefer underground burrows, others find refuge in dead wood and hollow plant stems, making them more likely to inhabit artificial bee homes. Solitary bees are essential pollinators, playing a crucial role in our ecosystem. By providing them with a suitable habitat you are helping this population to thrive. Even better, your bee home may also be used by other invertebrates, making your school grounds even more diverse!

When to create

Anytime

Where to place

Solitary bee homes should be positioned somewhere sunny and close to food sources, such as plant pots and meadows.

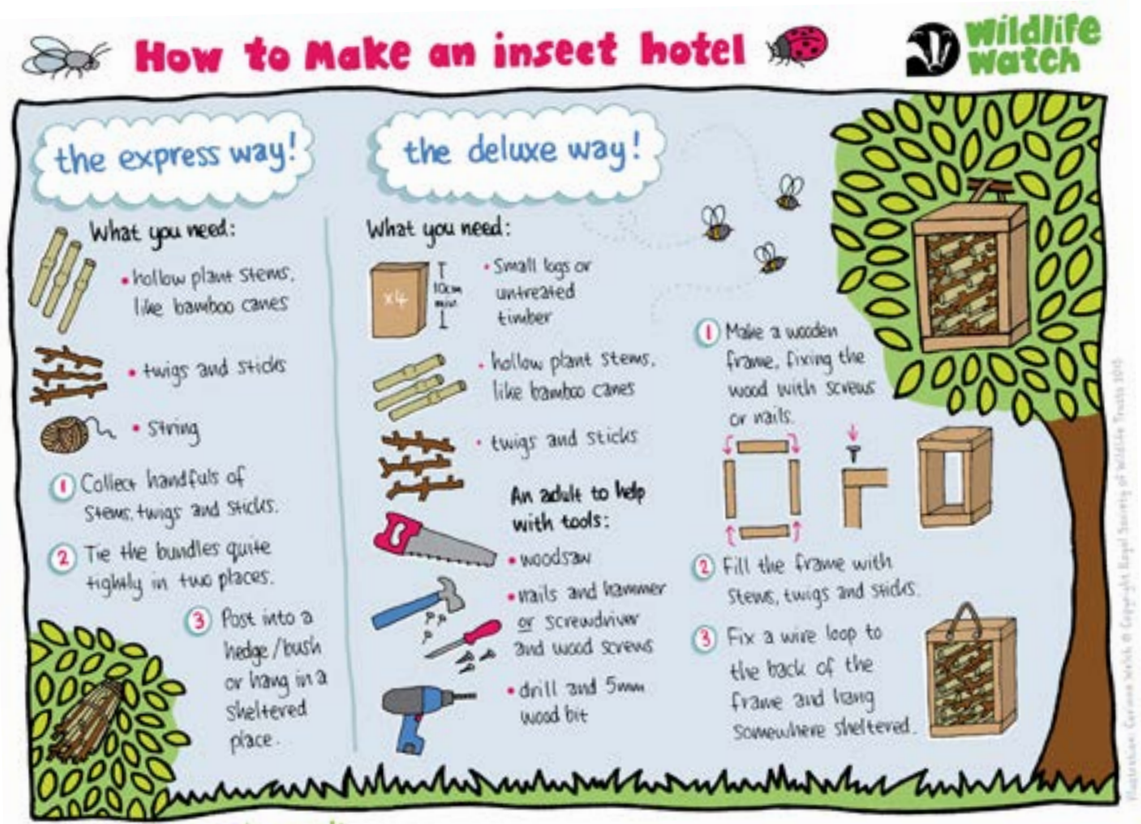
Maintenance

Any tubes in your solitary bee home that remain empty and not sealed up by the bees inside will need to be cleaned out or replaced at the end of each year, as parasites can quickly build up and harm the bees using them.

Alternative
Don't forget about the bumblebees! Check out our guide and make your own bumblebee nest

Alternative
Creating areas of bare ground will also encourage nesting solitary bees and is a quick and easy alternative!

Bee bombus lapidarius



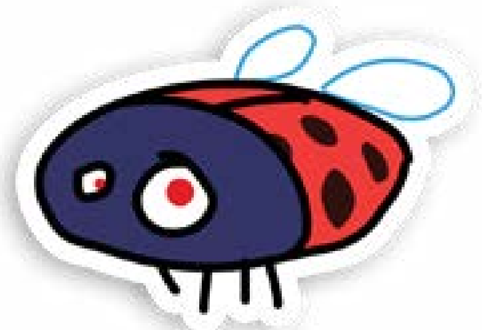
Bug hotel

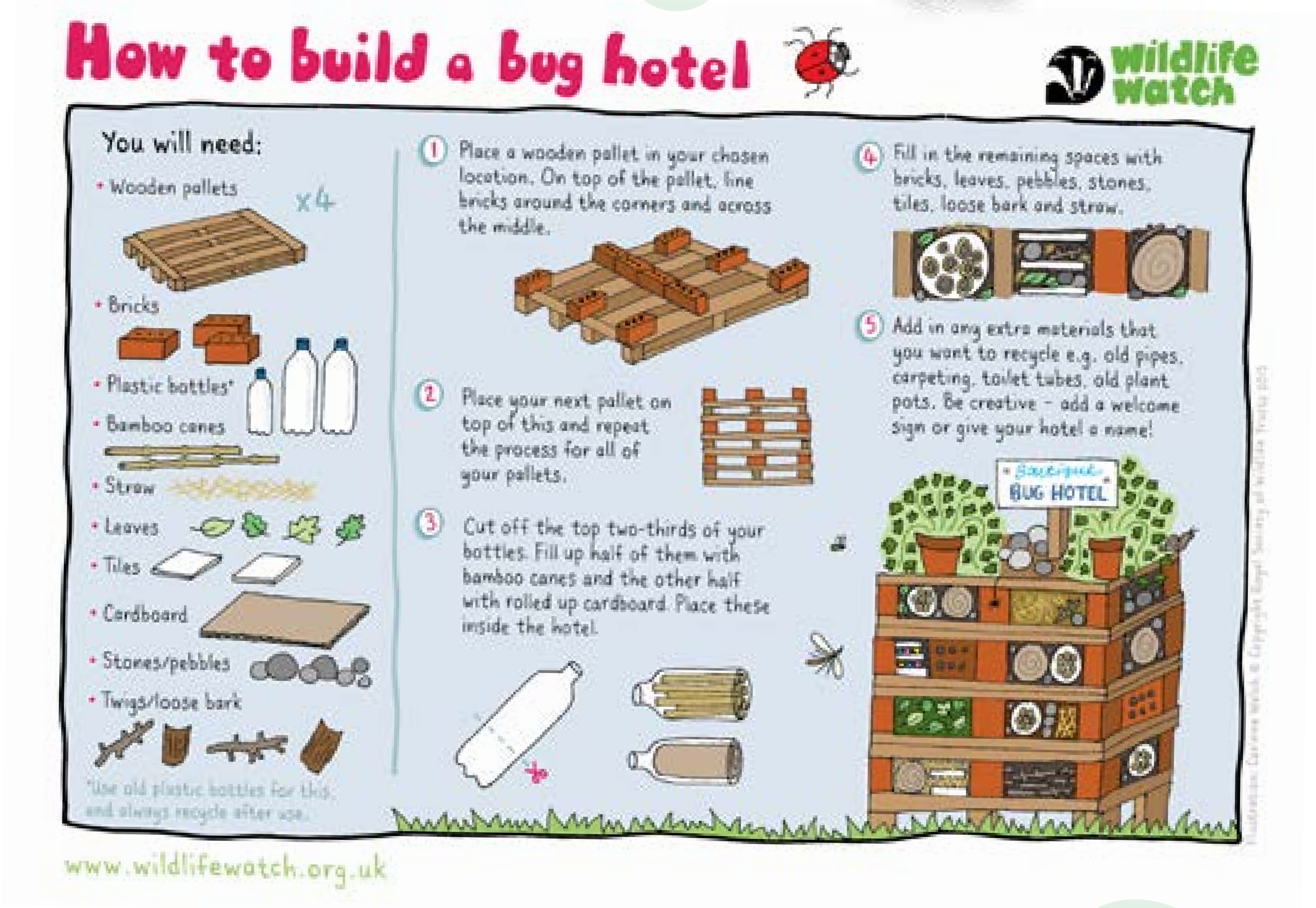
Creating a bug hotel is a fun project for the whole class and can be customised to any shape or size. Your bug hotel will attract a variety of invertebrates, including ladybirds, woodlice and millipedes. It's also a great chance to reuse some items that may have otherwise gone into the bin!

When to create
Anytime

Where to place
Place your bug hotel somewhere with a mixture of sun and shade.

Maintenance
There is very little maintenance to be done with a bug hotel aside from checking for any damage or signs of decay and repairing where necessary.





Habitat calendar

Refer to this calendar for reminders of when planting, habitat creation and maintenance needs to be done.

Creation (blue) Maintenance (green)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pond	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation
	Maintenance	Maintenance	Maintenance							Maintenance	Maintenance	Maintenance
Meadow								Creation	Creation	Creation		
							Maintenance	Maintenance	Maintenance	Maintenance		
Pond Hedgerow	Creation	Creation	Creation								Creation	Creation
	Maintenance	Maintenance										
Trees	Creation	Creation	Creation							Creation	Creation	Creation
Bird box	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation
	Maintenance	Maintenance								Maintenance	Maintenance	Maintenance
Bat box	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation
Bug hotel	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation
Solitary bee home	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation
									Maintenance	Maintenance		
Hedgehog home	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation	Creation
			Maintenance	Maintenance								

Useful links

If you need more information on a certain species or habitat, there are some amazing resources online. Please see below for additional information, contacts and resources.

Ponds

Swell UK
https://www.swelluk.com/pond-volume-calculator
Pond liner calculator.

The Wildlife Trust
https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-pond
Information about ponds and the creatures that live there.

Freshwater Habitats Trust
https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk
Information about ponds and the creatures that live there.

Sourcing plants and seeds

Pond Folk
https://www.pondfolk.co.uk/productgroup/uk-natives
Information about and supply of native pond plants.

Emorsgate Seeds
https://wildseed.co.uk/mixtures/complete-mixtures
Information about and supply of native wildflower seeds.

Free Trees for Schools
https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/
Information about and supply of native trees and hedges.

The Tree Council
https://treecouncil.org.uk
Information, resources and funding for trees.

Trees and hedges

The Woodland Trust
https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/how-to-plant
Guidance on how to plant trees.

Birds

Norwich Swift Network
https://www.facebook.com/NorwichSwift
Information about swifts and how you can help.

Barn Owl Trust
https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk
Information about owls and what owl boxes to install.

National Nestbox Week
https://www.nestboxweek.com/which-birds-use-nestboxes
Information about which bird boxes to install for which birds and when!

Bats

Norfolk and Norwich Bat Group
https://www.norwichbatgroup.co.uk/bats-in-norwich
Information about bats and how you can help.

Bat Conservation Trust
https://www.bats.org.uk/about-bats
Information about bats and how you can help.

Hedgehogs

Hedgehog Street
https://www.hedgehogstreet.org
Information about hedgehogs, how to become a Hedgehog Champion and more!

The British Hedgehog Preservation Society
https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk
Information about hedgehogs.

Insects and pollinators

Bumblebee Conservation Trust
https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org
Information about bees and various teaching resources.

Bug Life UK
https://www.buglife.org.uk
Information about minibeasts and how we can help.

British Dragonfly Society
https://british-dragonflies.org.uk
Information about dragonflies.

Butterfly Conservation
https://butterfly-conservation.org
Information on butterflies and moths and how you can help.

Teaching resources (how to use habitat creation as a teaching and learning activity):

Hedge Link
https://hedgelink.org.uk/hedge-hub/hedges-for-education/
Information about hedges and useful teaching resources.

National Education Nature Park
https://www.educationnaturepark.org.uk
Register to use the habitat mapping tool, and lots of great teaching resources.

Science and Plants for Schools
https://www.saps.org.uk
Useful teaching resources about plants.

Tree Tools for Schools
https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/menu
Useful teaching resources about trees and woodland.

Wildlife Watch
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk
Wildlife spotter sheets, activity sheets and more!

Identification Apps

Merlin
https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org
Bird song identification.

Seek
https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app
Identification of plants, insects, birds and more!

Citizen Science

RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch
https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch

Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count
https://butterfly-conservation.org

Natural History Museum Community Science
https://www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/monitor-and-encourage-nature/community-science.html

Garden minibeasts

wildlife watch

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Pictures: Garden spider and Hoverfly (c) Chris Maguire / Earthworm and Common earwig (c) Malcolm Storey / Common wasp (c) Paul Hobson / 7-spot ladybird (c) Jon Hawkins / Garden snail (c) Alan Price / Tortoiseshell butterfly (c) Scott Pelnek / Common carder bee (c) Rachel Scopes / Green shieldbug (c) Amy Lewis

Garden butterflies

wildlife watch

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Credits: Peacock, Comma, Painted lady and Red admiral (c) Richard Burkmar / Brimstone (c) Neil Phillips / Orange-tip and Small White (c) Les Binns / Green-veined white (c) Mike Brewton / Holly blue (c) Philip Precey / Small tortoiseshell by Ned Aldridge

Garden bird detective

wildlife watch

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Pictures: Chaffinch, Blue tit, Goldfinch and Great tit (c) Amy Lewis / Greenfinch (c) Gillian Day / House sparrow (c) Stewart McDonald / Blackbird (c) Neil Aldridge / Collared dove (c) Ian Rose / Starling (c) Margaret Holland / Wood pigeon (c) Steve Waterhouse

Discover animal tracks and signs

wildlife watch

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Wilder Schools Toolkit

Section 2

Nature and wellbeing activities

Why nature is important to wellbeing

Being outside in nature is proven to make us happier and healthier, and consequently vastly improves wellbeing. This section focuses on nature wellbeing activities that you can incorporate into your teaching for the benefit of your students, as well as providing ideas to help boost your own wellbeing.

At the end of this section on the Useful Links page you can find further information if you are interested in learning more about the impact of nature on wellbeing.

Being in nature improves wellbeing in a number of different ways:

- Promotes a calmer state of mind and helps regulate emotions.
- Encourages inspiration which increases motivation and creativity.
- Helps build positive relationships by connecting with others.
- Improves physical health through regular movement.
- The ever-changing outdoor environment helps promote resilience and adaption to change.
- Helps reduce eco-anxiety by carrying out postive actions for nature.

95%

of people see their mental health improve through being in nature*

5 ways to wellbeing in nature

The 5 ways to wellbeing* are simple, easy actions that studies have shown to improve wellbeing and our overall health. All of these can be practiced outside and have been shown to be especially effective when practiced out in nature!

Connect

Spending time with the people around you in nature.

Be Active

Moving around outside to improve mood and physical health.

Notice

Seeing and appreciating nature's beauty to enjoy the present moment.

Learn

Learning about nature can inspire and help improve self-esteem.

Give

Caring and taking action for nature and the local community around you.

Quick nature wellbeing activities

Incorporating wellbeing activities into a regular daily or weekly practice can make a big difference. To help you do this, on this page you will find a list of quick and easy nature activities linked to the 5 Ways to Wellbeing, that can be practiced throughout the year, whatever the season!

Change and adapt these to work with your schedule; you can do these during the school day, or they can be set as homework. For example, you could carry out one of these activities every week as part of a Mindful Monday practice. For full details of these activities click on the links or go to the Useful links section.

Connect
Learn
Be Active
Give
Notice

You can do these with your class or by yourself for your own wellbeing!

Connect
Learn
Be Active
Give
Notice

January

Wrap up and go outside feel the winter wind

Find tracks and trails* and identify who made them

Make bird feeders for garden birds*

February

Make a collective artwork using bark rubbings

Record how many species you see outside a window

Take part in the RSPB Big Garden bird watch*

March

Listen to birds singing outside

Go outside and identify the slugs* and snails* you find

Go on a walk to find signs of spring

April

Race for a rainbow, try and find one while it's raining

Scatter wildflower seeds or make seed bombs*

Explore nature using a magnifying glass

May

Tell a friend about the wildlife you have seen this week

Look up at the clouds

Walk outside in the grass with your bare feet

June

Go looking for a minibeasts

Using a spotter sheet find as many wildflowers as you can

Take your workout outside, exercise or stretch in nature

July

Sit and quietly listen to the sounds of nature

Discover the names of the tree species outside

Take part in the Big Butterfly Count*

August

Listen to wild sounds outdoors

Go for a wild walk and note down what you see

Provide water to wildlife

September

Draw outside in the wild or somewhere memorable

Build a log or leaf pile

Learn a new fact about your favorite species

October

Look for mini forest lichens and mosses

Make a journey stick* from foraged materials

Together see how many nuts and seeds* you can find

November

Discover the fungi growing outside

Make a wildlife spotter sheet* for a friend or family

Create a work of art out of leaves, twigs and pinecones

December

Pick up litter

Explore patterns and textures outside

Watch a live video of wildlife online

Longer nature wellbeing activities

For leading longer wellbeing workshops with groups, you can try out these two activities that link to the 5 Ways to Wellbeing. You can adapt or change these activities depending on your group, lesson plans and access to natural spaces.

Sense mapping

Focus: notice using different senses, connect to nature and the present moment.

Benefits: calms the mind, promotes relaxation, improves nature connection.

Length: this can vary depending on the type of activity and the group; if doing a sit spot this can be 5–15 minutes, if leading as a walk it can be 30 minutes to 1 hour.

What you need: a quiet space outdoors without distractions, an outdoor mat to sit on if the ground is wet, a planned route to walk if leading as a walk.

Variations: this can be led as a sit spot, or can be adapted to stand if there is no suitable place to sit or if it's raining. If you do not have access to an outside space this can be done in the classroom with the window open. Also you could lead this activity as a walk, stopping at intervals to focus on each sense.

Take this activity further

Include a reflection practice, either through individuals sharing with the group, or as a creative activity, such as a drawing or artwork using natural materials. Alternatively, they could write a poem about how it made them feel.

To make this a regular practice, you can build this into a daily classroom routine, in the classroom, after lunch or before registration.

How to guide session:

1. Instruct the group to find their own spot outside, not too close to anyone else. Invite them to sit, stand or lie down and make themselves comfortable.
2. Once everyone is settled, explain that the point of this activity is to quietly and calmly notice each sense one at a time.
3. Ask the group to close their eyes and focus their attention towards their breath.
4. After taking a few breaths, invite the group to notice their senses one by one. The length of time you spend with each sense will depend on the group and the time you have available. When doing this for the first time, start with small time intervals (30 seconds) and through regular practice you can build up to longer intervals (5 minutes).
5. Hearing – Using your ears what can you hear? Can you hear the wind whistling? Can you hear any wildlife around us?
6. Smell – Using your nose can you smell anything? The smell of the trees, the ground or grass?
7. Touch – Now focus on what you can feel, using your sense of touch. Can you feel the ground beneath you? How do your clothes feel against your skin? Reach out in front of you and feel the ground with your hands.
8. Sight – Open your eyes and notice what you can see. Look around you slowly and take it all in. What colours can you see? What is close by, and what is far away?
9. Before finishing, ask the group to focus on a couple of breaths to bring back their awareness and help ground them.
10. To finish, ask the group to reflect on their experience. What surprised you? What was your favourite sense? Who would like to share something they noticed?

Nature scavenger hunt

Focus: find things in nature that have meaning and to explore any feelings associated with these meanings.

Benefits: physical activity, encourages curiosity and inspiration, improves connection to nature and feelings, promotes valuing nature.

Length: 15 minutes, if adding a reflection practice it can last 30 minutes.

What you need: scavenger sheet with prompts, pens, pencils and clipboards.

Variations: You can keep the session flexible with the prompts starting with "something". Or you could rephrase the prompts to be specific to a topic. For example, if learning about plants in Science, you can focus on trees and flowers. Or during an Art session you can focus on patterns, shapes or colours. If doing this with younger children, give the prompts verbally one at a time, gathering back together after each to discuss.

How to guide session:

1. Take your group to an area outside where they are able to explore freely and safely.
2. Explain that in this session you will be exploring nature to find things that each person finds meaningful, and that there are no right answers, as each individual sees the world in a different way.
3. Hand out scavenger sheets, either with clipboards and/or pens if required.
4. Set a time limit and boundary to explore, and send the group off to find their own answers to the questions. They can either write or draw their answers.
5. Gather group back together to reflect and share what everyone found, and what they mean to them.

Take this activity further

- Collect natural items and make nature tables* of what everyone found.
- Create a collective artwork piece.
- Draw their experiences of the scavenger hunt.
- Repeat activity in the future and reflect on differences in answers and experiences.

Example scavenger sheet prompts:

Something that makes you happy	Something that is your favourite colour	Something that you are thankful for
Something that you want to protect	Something that is fun to watch move around	Something you want to learn more about
Something you want to touch	Something you have never seen before	Something that you think is beautiful

Useful links

Wellbeing and nature

To learn more about the 5 ways to wellbeing check out **Mind's** website
https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/five-ways-to-wellbeing

If you want to learn more about the importance connecting to nature for our mental health, and ways to improve nature connection check out these links:

Nature
How connecting with nature benefits our mental health | Mental Health Foundation
https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/research/nature-how-connecting-nature-benefits-our-mental-health

Nature Connectedness Research Group
Research centres and groups – University of Derby the-nature-connection-handbook.pdf (findingnature.org.uk)
https://findingnature.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/the-nature-connection-handbook.pdf

Wellbeing books for children

A Little Dose of Nature by Dr Alison Greenwood
The Huge Bag of Worries by Frank Rodgers
Shadow Monsters and Courageous Hearts: Stories of Recovery to Empower and Inspire by Hayley Graham and Tor Allen
An Emotional Menagerie: An A to Z of poems about feelings: Feelings from A-Z (School of Life) by The School of Life, Alain De Bottom and Rachael Saunders

Children and young people wellbeing services

Children and young people | Norfolk and Suffolk NHS (nsft.nhs.uk)
https://www.nsft.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people/service/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs-norfolk-121/

Services To Support You (justonenorfolk.nhs.uk)
https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/emotional-health/norfolk-waveney-mental-health-advice-support-for-0-25-s/

Adult wellbeing services

The wellbeing of your students is crucial, but it is just as important you look after your own wellbeing. For ideas of how you can improve your wellbeing in nature check out these links.

For ideas of how to support your wellbeing using nature, check out suggestions on **Mind's** website
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/nature-and-mental-health/ideas-to-try-in-nature/

To support your own wellbeing outside in nature, **Norfolk and Waveney Mind** hold workshops throughout the year including regular forest bathing sessions
https://www.norfolkandwaveneymind.org.uk/connecting-with-nature

Green Light Trust is a charity supporting people to improve their mental health through nature, they hold regular outdoor workshops to improve wellbeing
https://www.greenlighttrust.org/

Activity links

Tracks and Signs ID
https://www.wildlondon.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/Discover%20animal%20tracks%20and%20signs.pdf

Bird Feeders
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/BIRD-FEEDER-RGB-2018.jpg

RSPB Bird Garden Bird Watch
https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch

Slugs ID
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-05/SLUG-ID-SHEET-RGB.jpg

Snails ID
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-05/SNAILS-ID-SHEET-RGB.jpg

Wildflower seed bombs
https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/SEED-BOMBS-RGB.jpg

Big Butterfly Count
https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/

Make a Journey Stick
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/JOURNEY-STICK-RGB.jpg

Nut hunting
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/NUT-HUNTING-RGB.jpg

Make own Wildlife Spotter Sheet
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/things-do/get-started-your-spotter-sheets

Nature Table
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/NATURE%20TABLE-RGB.jpg

Wilder Schools Toolkit

Section 3

Outdoor learning activities and the national curriculum

Many teachers are aware of the benefits of being outside, both for themselves and their pupils, but if there isn't an established 'whole school' approach to outdoor learning or if nature isn't already embedded in the curriculum, starting to take lessons outside can feel like a daunting task.

However, learning outside doesn't have to be an 'extra thing' to add pressure to an already busy school day. It can be part of lessons, providing children with alternative experiences, creating 'sticky' learning opportunities by evoking the senses and emotions, which will help to embed and deepen understanding of concepts, knowledge and skills. In addition, it has the added benefit of supporting wellbeing, mental health, child development and nature connection.

The information in this section is intended to provide you with ideas to help take learning beyond the classroom and out into the natural world.

Frequently asked questions

Q What if I don't have enough time for extra lessons outside?

A
- Use time outside to cover all or part of an objective, so it is integrated into your lesson planning, rather than an added extra
- Carry out a knowledge-based lesson indoors, before taking learning outside and use the outdoor experience to enhance learning in the classroom
- Use outdoor learning as a 'hook' activity for a new topic or to review learning at the end of a piece of work

Q How can I take my class outside if I don't have extra adults?

A
- Keep things simple at first, starting with activities children can do independently — such as treasure/scavenger hunts or spotter sheets
- Develop routines for being outside and gradually increase the complexity of tasks as children become used to working in a different environment

Q Will behaviour be worse when outside? How can I manage it?

A
- Create an 'Outdoor Pledge' with the children before heading outside, which outlines the expected behaviours
- Have a regular place or 'base' where all outdoor learning starts and ends to help introduce and conclude lessons
- Children tend to flourish when outside

Q Can I take learning outside if my school doesn't have a large site?

A
- A playground is enough, with leaves or stones brought in from other sites if needed
- Children could be tasked with bringing in natural items from home and a collection could be created, to be reused whenever learning outside

Q Will we need lots of expensive outdoor clothing?

A
- Start venturing outside in the warmer, drier months when the weather is favourable
- Waterproof ponchos are a cheap alternative for short sessions outside
- If going outdoors for longer sessions, second hand or donated items can be collected and kept for those children/ adults who don't have access to suitable outdoor clothing/shoes

Q Will I need lots of resources?

A
- The activity ideas in this toolkit have been chosen because they require minimal resources;
  - Natural items, such as sticks, leaves, acorns, seeds, stones preferably taken from the floor or if collecting from living plants, as little as possible taken to limit damage to the natural environment
  - Chalk
  - String
  - Camera to capture learning
  - Clipboards and pencils or whiteboards and pens
- A box with a basic set of equipment can be created, so it is easy to take outside whenever needed (see Outdoor Learning Basic Resource Kit List in 'Templates' at the end of this section)

Q Will I have to write lots of risk assessments?

A
- Your school will have an existing range of site risk assessments, so check if any of these can be used or adapted
- Find a template risk assessment in 'Templates' at the end of this section
- If you need to write a new risk assessment, there are some great examples on the Learning through Landscapes* website.

Subject-specific activity ideas

Here are a selection of outdoor activity ideas, linked to specific subjects and learning areas. For English, Maths and Science there is one extended activity plan, followed by some supplementary activities for each subject area. A list of activity ideas are supplied for the Foundation subjects.

Use the Useful Links at the end of this section to take your learning outside even further!

English

Subject: English
Area: Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation
Activity name: Anything but a stick
Ages: KS1 and KS2

Equipment
- An area big enough to have a class or group of children standing in a circle
- A stick to pass around or children could collect their own sticks

Activity
1. Children to stand in a circle and each child to describe their stick using a noun: "This isn't a stick it's ……." (children decide, for example "a key")
2. Repeat adding an adjective to their noun to create an expanded noun phrase: "This isn't a stick it's a golden key."
3. The activity can be repeated as needed, giving children the chance to add further vocabulary and grammatical features e.g.: "This isn't a stick it's an old, golden key, which was found in an ancient woodland (amongst other treasures) in a mischievous magpie's nest."

Options
- This activity could be verbal and children challenged to remember their sentence, which they transcribe once back in the classroom
- Alternatively, the ideas generated can be noted down and once they are back in the classroom children can transcribe them, applying correct punctuation or underlining key grammatical features
- Children could be challenged to include specific grammar such as: fronted adverbials, relative clauses or passive verbs etc.

Take it further
- **Write about their item:** the children could explain the journey of their item, maybe in a journal or diary format, write a short, detailed description or weave their item into a narrative
- **Write a poem:** the children could use some of the ideas generated to write a poem either about the item the stick became or describe the tree the stick came from

More ways to take English lessons outside

Activity name: Nature letters
Ages: KS1
Activity instructions
- Make an outline on the ground using sticks to represent upper- and/or lower-case letters
- If time, fill them with collected natural materials
- Photograph the letters to use for display or activities in the classroom

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Activity name: Natural phonics
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity instructions
- Create a key with the children where a natural item replaces a grammar feature (such as a sound, silent letter, punctuation etc.)
- Write some example words on the playground with chalk, which contain the grammar feature replaced with the natural items in the key
- Ask children to guess the words and write down the word with the correct sound/silent letter/punctuation etc.

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Activity name: Story setting
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity instructions
- Children collect natural materials and use these to create a physical map/setting for a story
- Photograph their creation and use in school to inspire a description, story or poem

Activity name: Alliteration poems
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity instructions
- Children select 5 small natural items to use as a basis for a poem where children follow the format: number – adjective – alliteration – noun. E.g.: One smooth, silvery stone; Two glossy, green leaves etc.

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Maths

Subject: Maths
Area: Calculations: addition and subtraction
Activity name: Natural number bonds
Ages: KS1

Equipment
- Natural items such as stones, acorns or seeds
- A pot or container to cover some of the items

Activity
1. Children to work in pairs with a set number of natural items between them e.g.: 10 or 20
2. Child B closes eyes/turns around, whilst Child A hides some of the items leaving the remaining amount visible
3. Child B calculates the number of items hidden
4. Child A reveals the answer and a point is scored if correct

Options
- Children could work in groups of 4, made up of two pairs, so they have a partner to support them when solving calculations
- Children could write the calculations down (either in books or on whiteboards) to record their work

Take it further
- This activity could be used to develop an understanding of inverse operations e.g.: 20 – ? = 6 so 20 = 6 + ? and related number facts ? + 6 = 20, 6 + ? = 20, etc.

Subject: Maths
Area: Calculations: four operations
Activity name: Natural equations
Ages: KS2

Equipment
- Playground
- Natural items such as stones, acorns, sticks or leaves
- Chalk
- Activity sheet for each group with a key for the value of the natural items and a target answer

Activity
1. Model how to set out calculations, for example (where leaf = 1):
   6 + (leaf) = 7
   (leaf) + 22 = 23
   10 - (leaf) = 9
   8 - 7 = (leaf)
2. Children to work in groups to write calculations on the playground with chalk and natural materials, adding in the correct functions and answers

Options
- Children could source their own natural materials
- This activity could be a purely practical lesson or children could note down their calculations in their books for use in the classroom

Take it further
- Some children may be able to make up their own calculations and then try to solve each other's

Click here* for further activity instructions

More ways to take Maths lessons outside

Activity name: 2D and 3D shape
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity
- In pairs, children make a 2D shape with four sticks
- Adults draw a net of the shape on the playground using chalk. Can children make the net with their sticks?

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Activity name: Chalk clock faces
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity
- Children create clocks on the playground using string and chalk and make the hands using sticks or even their bodies!

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Activity name: Multiplication activity
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity
- Children use leaves with various leaflets to investigate multiplication and division e.g.: horse chestnut leaves can have 5–7 leaflets, clover 3 leaflets, etc.
- Provide various calculations for children to answer using the leaves
- Children could use chalk to write their calculations on the playground or record in their books for use back in the classroom

Activity name: Physical functions
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity
- Children to be in a large outdoor space, with a ball, bean bag or other suitable item for children to throw and catch
- A function is assigned to the item and children calculate the answer as the item is thrown e.g.: if the function is doubling, the thrower says 4 and the catcher says 8.
- Various different functions can be used, depending upon the focus for your year group

Science

Subject: Science
Area: Food chains and webs
Activity name: Food chain frenzy
Ages: KS1 and KS2

Equipment
- A large open space such as a playground or field
- Tags or PE bands of at least two different colours
- Whistle
- A way to record results

Activity
1. Divide children into three equal sized groups; grass, rabbits and foxes
2. Grass to have a tag/PE band tucked into their waistbands and to remain stationary. They can be 'eaten' by rabbits who steal their tags/bands.
3. Rabbits to have a tag/PE band tucked into their waistbands as a 'tail' and to run around trying to eat the 'grass', whilst avoiding the foxes.
4. Foxes do not have a tag/PE band and run around trying to 'eat' the rabbits by stealing their 'tails'.
5. Start and end the game by blowing a whistle.
6. Repeat with children taking on a different role.

Options:
- This game can be used to show the impact of varying numbers of producers and consumers on populations. The teacher can note the number of each species at the end of the first game and then each child takes on a new role according to the results:

	If you have been eaten you become	If you have not been predated upon and have eaten a meal	If you have not eaten any prey and have not been predated upon
GRASS	rabbit	no change	grass
RABBIT	fox	rabbit	grass
FOX	no change	fox	grass

Several short rounds should be played, with the new numbers of organisms recorded after each.

Take it further:
- Create a graph: The population numbers for each organism could then be plotted on a graph and compared
- Create a food chain/web for your school grounds: compile a list of the organisms found in your school grounds and children create their own food chains/webs to illustrate the interaction between species.

More ways to take Science lessons outside

Activity name: Nature journal
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity
- Children could make and keep a nature journal, charting changes over the school year (links to KS1 Science)
- This activity could also be linked to English, PSHE, art etc.

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Activity name: Scavenger hunts
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity
- Children are given a set of objects or criteria to find or spot evidence of in the natural world
- This can be used to support children exploring, grouping and investigating various scientific concepts e.g.: properties of materials.

Click here* for scavenger hunt ideas from Woodland Trust.

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Activity name: Incredible invertebrates
Ages: KS1 and KS2
Activity
- Children hunt for various minibeasts/ invertebrates within the school ground using old yoghurt pots and paint brushes to gently collect their finds
- Children can hunt for specific creatures, linked to investigating a particular habitat or microhabitat or explore to see what they can find
- Creatures can be categorised according to their various features and scientific keys created to aid identification

Click here* for spotter sheets from The Wildlife Trusts.

Activity name: Battle of the beaks
Ages KS2
Activity
- Children choose a beak type (scissors, spoons, tweezers/chop-sticks or clothes pegs).
- One type of food is provided and children are given a set amount of time to collect as much food as they can to put in their stomach (pots/cups).
- Repeat with a different food type (rubber bands, paper clips, marbles, pasta etc.)
- After each food type, record the amounts each different beak was able to collect.

Click here* for further activity instructions (you will need to create an account to download full details).

Foundation subjects

Subject: Art
Nature brushes: children use a variety of natural items e.g.: feathers, leaves etc. as paintbrushes, either on their own or tied to a stick with string.

Mud painting: children use different dilutions of mud to create a range of different tones to paint with, either using standard or nature brushes.

Hapa zome: children use large rounded stones or rubber mallets to pound plants to release their colours onto cloth.

Click here* for further activity instructions.

There are many artists whose work can be used to inspire nature based arts but two particularly good ones are: Andy Goldsworthy and Georgia O'Keefe

Subject: Computing
Scientific keys: children could create these yes/no keys on various software, to help others identify various living things in the school grounds (such as plants or invertebrates).

Coding: children work in pairs or groups using sticks to create 2D shapes on the ground. Once created, they write instructions from a start point for creating their shape (algorithm). Children to check and debug their algorithms and once happy with it, take a photo, pick up their sticks and challenge another group or pair to make their shape using the algorithm, checking it against the photo.

Click here* for further activity instructions

Identification: children use apps such as Merlin (bird songs), Seek (plants, fungi, invertebrates*) or Google Lens*. It is always useful to compare with ID features in books however, to ensure the ID is correct. Children could evaluate the merits of various ID sources and the benefits of using them in conjunction with each other.

Subject: Design and Technology
Nest or den building: children to think about design elements, explore construction methods and create their own nests or dens.

Click here* for further nest building instructions.

Click here* for further den building instructions

Subject: Languages
Scavenger hunts: various challenge sheets could be made for different items in the natural world, such as invertebrates, colours, weather etc.

Click here* for activity ideas from National Curriculum Outdoors.

Subject: Geography
Creating a micro journey: children consider routes, directions and mapping in miniature

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Map your patch: children make a map of their journey to school or around their school grounds

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Compass treasure hunt: a great way to build knowledge of angles and directions

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Subject: History
Den building: an understanding of Neolithic life can be explored in this activity

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Subject: Music
Bird song: children could use the Merlin bird ID app to look at the visual representation of various common bird songs and recreate the rhythms or pitch (such as the song of a great tit: tea-cher, tea-cher, tea-cher)

Sound maps: children create sound maps of what they hear around them, either inside or outside. Children could then recreate their own soundscapes. This could also be linked to the science of sound and hearing.

Click here* for further activity instructions.

Subject: PSHE
Leaf kebab: Children skewer leaves onto a stick to create their leaf kebab. This activity can be used in a variety of ways — as a mindfulness experience or linked to art or maths. Children can be challenged to add leaves in certain ways e.g.: from smallest to largest, to create a repeating pattern, by colour, features etc.

Useful links

For activity ideas

English

Nature letters
https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_giant_nature_letters.pdf

Natural phonics
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/natural-phonics/

Alliteration poems
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/descriptive-alliteration-poems/

Maths

Natural equations
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/natural-equations/

2D and 3D shape
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/2d-to-3d-shapes/

Chalk clock faces
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/chalk-clock-faces-2/

Science

Nature journal
https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/how-to-make-and-use-a-nature-journal-to-record-your-wildlife-obs.html

Battle of the beaks
https://www.stem.org.uk/resources/elibrary/resource/32696/battle-beaks

Woodland Trust scavenger hunts
https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/menu/

The Wildlife Trust activity sheets
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/activities

Foundation subjects

Art

Hapa zome
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/japanese-art-of-hapa-zome/

Design and Technology

Nest building
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/nest-building/

Den building
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/neolithic-dens/

Computing

Coding
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/coding-sticks/

Identification apps

Merlin
https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/

Seek
https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app

Languages

National curriculum outdoors
https://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/national-curriculum-outdoors

Geography

Micro journey
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/micro-journey/

Map your patch
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/map-your-patch/

Compass treasure hunt
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/compass-treasure-hunt/

History

Den building
https://ltl.org.uk/resources/neolithic-dens/

Music

Sound maps
https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/resources/activities/sound-maps

For resources to use in school

Learning through Landscapes
https://ltl.org.uk/

Sensory Trust
https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/resources/activities

The Wild Network
https://thewildnetwork.com/wild-time-learning/

Tree tools for schools (from Woodland Trust)
https://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/categorymenu/?cat=activities

Wildlife Watch (from The Wildlife Trusts)
https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/activities

Merlin
https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/

Seek
https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app

For embedding nature and the outdoors in your curriculum

National Curriculum Outdoors
https://nationalcurriculumoutdoors.com/
is a scheme of work, which is available to purchase. However, there are some free resources/images available online
https://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/national-curriculum-outdoors**, which provide an overview of the types of activities the schemes cover and may also provide ideas for ways to adapt your curriculum.**

For extending outdoor learning beyond your school grounds

Council for Learning outside the Classroom
https://www.lotc.org.uk/

Field Studies Council
https://www.field-studies-council.org/

Historic England
https://historicengland.org.uk/

National Parks
https://www.nationalparks.uk/

National Trust
https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/

Norfolk Wildlife Trust
https://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/

Royal Horticultural Society
https://www.rhs.org.uk/

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
https://www.rspb.org.uk/

The Wildlife Trusts
https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/

Woodland Trust
https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/

Templates

Designed to be cut out – so you can easily photocopy!

Outdoor Learning Basic Resource Kit List

- [ ] A large plastic box, with lid, for storing the items below
- [ ] A tough trolley e.g. a festival trolley for ease of transporting the box outside
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Hand sanitizer
- [ ] Whistle
- [ ] Camera
- [ ] Twine, scissors, blu-tack, elastic bands
- [ ] Laminated ID sheets and/or keys for birds, insects, plants or relevant apps on electronic devices
- [ ] Laminated treasure/scavenger hunt sheets
- [ ] Electronic device with free apps to identify species, such as: Merlin (birds), Seek (plants and invertebrates), Google Lens (various)
- [ ] Tarps, kneeling pads or other things to sit on
- [ ] Set of clipboards and pencils or whiteboards and pens
- [ ] A pair of sturdy gardening gloves and secateurs for adults to use, in case of brambles/nettles
- [ ] Clear yoghurt pots and old paint brushes for sampling/collecting minibeasts
- [ ] Old trays or other containers for collecting natural items
- [ ] Chalks

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

The Wildlife Trusts

norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Risk assessment

This risk assessment is a generic overview of some risks you may encounter. It is designed to be photocopied, annotated and adapted by school staff when creating their own risk assessments.

What are the hazards?	How could the hazard cause harm?	What are the actions required to reduce the possibility of harm and who should complete them?
Weather	Cold/hypothermia in winter. Sunstroke/ sunburn in the summer. Falling tree branches and flying debris in high winds or if left unstable after a storm or high winds	Staff to assess conditions on the day and adapt as necessary: shelter to be sought in cold/wet conditions, or areas away from trees in brisk winds; shade/regular breaks in high heat and pupils encouraged to drink plenty of water and apply sun cream if they have it. Pupils advised to wear suitable clothing for the weather conditions. Anyone not suitably dressed may not be able to take part in activities. In the event of extreme weather conditions, sessions may be cancelled.
Uneven terrain	Tripping or falling leading to physical injury	Staff to also assess area on the day, as part of their pre-session risk assessment. Participants warned of possible hazards and advised to take care. Pupils advised to wear suitable outdoor footwear.
Zoonosis and phytotoxins (stings, bites, ticks)	Illness and allergic reaction (such as anaphylactic shock, Lyme disease, Weil's disease)	Staff to assess area on the day, as part of their pre-session risk assessment. Participants given clear instructions about appropriate behaviour during the session and warned not to touch live animals. If investigating minibeasts, paintbrushes to be used to scoop invertebrates into viewing pots. Participants told to wash hands before eating and antibacterial hand sanitizer provided for use during session. Appropriate medication such as an EpiPen to be carried by participants who may be at risk. In the warmer months, pupils advised to use insect repellent, if they have it and to keep arms and legs covered, with trousers tucked into socks, in areas where ticks may be present.
Contact with plants/ other items when collecting materials or investigating wildlife	Cuts, scratches, illness and allergic reaction, such as anaphylactic shock	Staff to also assess area on the day, as part of their pre-session risk assessment. Participants warned of any hazardous plants within the area and told to avoid them.
Improper use of equipment	Cuts, bruises, eye injury	Staff to ensure equipment is in good condition before use in a session. Participants given clear instructions about appropriate use of equipment and provided with demonstrations where appropriate.
Individual medical requirements	Specific to individuals	Staff aware of relevant allergies and to carry medication for those children requiring it e.g.: inhaler, EpiPen. First aid facilities available at school.
Safeguarding	Children, staff and volunteers	School staff are DBS checked and safeguarding trained, and aware of causes of concern. Staff to raise concerns with DSL as appropriate.

The Wildlife Trusts

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